

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 281416Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBSSY TEL AVIV

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INFO AMEMBSSY AMMAN

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 0624

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US, XF

SUBJECT: CODEL INOUE--SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY: PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES OF JANUARY 23-27 ISRAEL VISIT BY SENATORS DANIEL K. INOUE AND CHARLES M. MATHIAS WERE (A) TO ASSESS ISRAEL'S FOREIGN AID REQUEST ON BEHALF OF SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE AND (B) TO HIGHLIGHT FOR GOI LEADERS CHANGING ATTITUDES IN SENATE RE US INVOLVMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. CODEL EMPHASIZED US COMMITMENT TO SECURITY OF ISRAEL AND SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING FOR ITS PROBLEMS, BUT PRESSED HARD RE JUSTIFICATION FOR CONTINUING HIGH LEVEL OF US ASSISTANCE. CODEL MET WITH SENIOR GOI LEADERS . CHIF OF STAFF AND OTHER IDF GENERALS VIEWED IDF INSTALLATIONS AND TOOK IDF-CONDUCTED TRIPS TO SINAI, INCLUDING RAS SUDAR AND MITLA PASS, AND TO GOLAN HEIGHTS. ISRAELIS WENT ALL OUT TO PRESENT THEIR CASE, PROVIDING IN-DEPTH BRIEFINGS AND AGREEING TO SUBMIT WRITTEN MEMORANDA ON VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. ONLY EXCEPTION TO GOI'S CORDIAL AND WARM RECEPTION WAS ITS REFUSAL TO ALLOW CODEL TO VISIT REFUGEE CAMPS ON WEST BANK, REGARDING WHICH CODEL EXPRESSED ITS DEEP DISSATISFACTION. END SUMMARY.

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2. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF CODEL'S DISCUSSIONS WITH GOI

LEADERS. NEA ESCORT OFFICE JOSEPH MONTVILLE WILL BE PROVIDING MORE DETAILED ACCOUNT.

3. CHANGING ATTITUDE IN US SENATE, SENATOR INOUE, IN HIS OPENING PRESENTATION TO FINANCE MINISTER RABINOWITZ AND IN ALL SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS, ASSESSED RECENT CHANGES IN SENATE, AND ON PART OF US PUBLIC, CONCERNING US INVOLVEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST AND SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. INOUE SAID SENATE'S PRINCIPAL CONCERN NOW WAS WITH US NATIONAL INTEREST RATHER THAN THAT OF STATES IN AREA. MANY SENATORS STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF NEED FOR US EVEN-HANDEDNESS IN MIDEAST, FAILURE SO FAR TO IMPLEMENT UNSC 242 AND NEED FOR EQUITY IN SOLVING PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. THERE WAS GROWING CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN AID PROGRAMS, AND TO INVOLVEMENT OF US FORCES IN REGIONAL CONFLICTS. MOREOVER, SENATE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT RISK OF NEW "WAR BY ACCIDENT" IN MIDDLE EAST. ISRAELI PRE-EMPTIVE ATTACK WOULD SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZE SUPPORT OF ISRAEL AND THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF US SENDING TROOPS TO AREA. INOUE NOTED THAT AMERICAN PUBLIC LINKED CURRENT DOMESTIC ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, TO FAILURE TO RESOLVE ARAB/ISRAELI DISPUTE. HE TOLD GOI LEADERS THAT HE WOULD FILE CLASSIFIED REPORT AND ASKED THEM TO SUBMIT NUMEROUS WRITTEN MEMORANDA IN SUPPORT OF AID REQUEST. HE STRESSED THAT ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO "SELL" ITS AID REQUEST IN US. GOI OFFICIALS SAID THAT THEY WOULD FURNISH HIM WITH ALL DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED.

4. SHORT TERM IMPACT OF INOUE'S OPENING REMARKS WAS REFLECTED IN FACT THAT PRIME MINISTER ARRANGED FOR UNSCHEDULED MEETING WITH CODEL ON FIRST DAY OF VISIT IN ADDITION TO FORMAL SESSION AT ITS CONCLUSION. ONLY PARTICIPANTS AT MEETING WERE RABIN, INOUE AND MATHIAS. CODEL DESCRIBED MEETING TO US AS EXTREMELY FRANK AND CANDID SESSION, BUT DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS.

5. GOI FOREIGN AID REQUEST. CODEL RECEIVED DETAILED BRIEFINGS RE GOI'S FY 76 AID REQUEST WITH EMPHASIS ON ITS MILITARY COMPONENTS. PERES/GUR MILITARY BRIEFING REPEATED ESSENTIALLY MAIN POINTS MADE TO TREASURY SECRETARY SIMON (TEL AVIV 4056 DATED JULY 19, 1974) AND REPEATED CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBSEQUENTLY IN WASHINGTON. AS REGARDS DEFENSE COMPONENT IN FY-76 REQUEST, GOI SAID 1.5 BILLION DOLLARS WAS FOR MILITARY PURCHASE THROUGH DOD WITH ADDITIONAL 300. MILLION DOLLARS FMS DIRECT PURCHASES FROM US FIRMS. GOI DECLINED TO ESTIMATE BREAKDOWN BETWEEN GRANTS AND LOANS, BUT STRESSED THAT IT WOULD SEEK HIGH PERCENTAGE IN GRANTS GIVEN ITS VERY LARGE EXTERNAL DEBT BURDEN--BY END OF 1975 DEBT WILL REACH 8.4 BILLION DOLLARS AND ANNUAL SERVICING 1.25 BILLION DOLLARS.

6. GOI STATED THAT AMOUNT REQUESTED REPRESENTED ABSOLUTE MINIMUM NECESSARY FOR PRESERVATION OF STRONG ISRAELI DEFENSE POSTURE. IN REPLY TO SENATOR INOUE'S QUESTION RE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES OR REDUCTIONS IN GOI REQUEST, GOI LEADERS STRESSED THAT ONLY ALTERNATIVE WAS A WEAK ISRAEL. THIS , THEY EMPHASIZED, WAS NEITHER IN ISRAEL NOR AMERICAN INTEREST.

7. GOI LEADRS STATED THAT FY76 AID REQUEST CONTAINED FIRST TRANCHE OF THREE-YEAR MILITARY IMPORT PROGRAM TOTALLING 4.5 BILLION DOLLARS. IT WAS MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER THAT EVEN THESE AMOUNTS OVERNEXT THREE YEARS WOULD NOT COMPLETE ISRAEL'S MILITARY REQUIREMENTS, ANDTHAT ADDIIONAL FINANCING WOULD BE REQUESTED IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.

8. US NATIONAL INTEREST IN ISRAEL. SNEATOR INOUE ASKED GOI LEADERS TO DESCRIBE NATURE OF US NATIONAL INTEREST IN ISRAEL. IN REPLY, ISRAELI EMPHASIZED (A) US COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL WAS INTEGRAL TO ITS COMMITMENT TO FREE WORLD,(B) MIDDLE EAST STABILITY DEPENDED ON EXISTENCE OF STRONG, SELF-DEFENSIBLE AND DEMOCRATIC ISRAEL.(C) ARABS WOULD NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ONLY WITH A STRONG ISRAEL, AND (D) HENCE, PROSPECTS FOR PEACE WOULD FALTER IF ARABS BELIEVED THEY COULD DIVIDE US FROM ISRAEL. US STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN REGION ALSO WERE SERVED BY CLOSE US-ISRAELI RELATIONS. RABIN AND ALLON BOTH CITED CASE OF US REQUEST TO ISRAEL FOR MILITARY SUPPORT IN CONNECTION WITH 1970 JORDAN CIVIL WAR. ALLON ALSO NOTED AGREEMENT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER IN RECENT MEETING WITH HIS VIEW THAT STRONG ISRAEL WAS IMPORTANT TO US GIVEN INSTABILTY IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
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9. GOI NEGOTIATING POSTURE. GOI LEADERS RE-STATED THEIR CURRENT BASIC POSITIONS ON ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS: SUPPORT FOR US STAGED APPROACH; READINESS TO CONCLUDE NEGOTIATED POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WITH ALL ARAB STATES INVOLVED IN CONFLICT AND REFUSAL TO TALK TO PLO. ON PROSPECTS OR ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN SECOND STAGE AGREEMENT. GOI LEADERS EXPRESSED SOME CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM. ALLON SAID THAT SADAT'S RECENT LE MONDE INTERVIEW CONTAINED POSITIVE ELEMENTS, PARTICULARLY HIS RECOGNITION THAT ONLY US CAN BRING ABOUT FURTHER ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL (ALLON SAID HE PREFERRED TO SPEAK ABOUT US INFLUENCE RATHER THAN PRESSURE). RABIN IN CONTRAST SAID THAT SADAT'S LATEST STATEMENTS WERE DISCOURAGING BUT THAT HE WOULD DRAW NO FIRM CONCLUSION UNTIL HIS NEXT TALKS WITH SECRETARY. GOI LEADERS ALL STRESSED THAT ISSUE REMAINED CONTEXT OF EGYPTIAN QUID PRO QUO IN RETURN FOR NEXT ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. CONVERSATIONS DID NOT DEVELOP SPECIFIC ISRAELI THINKING ON ISSUES OF ABU RODEIS AND SINAI PASSES.

10. GENEVA CONFERENCE. RABIN EXPRESSED FIRM OPPOSITION TO CONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE AT THIS TIME. HE SAID THAT, SHOULD US STAGED APPROACH FAIL, ARABS AND SOVIETS WOULD DEMAND CONVENING OF CONFERENCE. RABIN NOTED THAT IT WOULD ONLY PRODUCE SHARP CONFRONTATION LEADING TO POLITICAL STALEMATE, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND ENHANCE DANGER OF NEW WAR. BOTH RABIN AND ALLON HOWEVER CLAIMED THAT ISRAEL WOULD GO TO GENEVA IF NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM--ALTHOUGH THEY WOULD NOT AGREE TO PLO PARTICIPATION.

11. WAR PROSPECTS. RABIN ANTICIPATED RISE IN MIDDLEEAST POLITICAL TENSIONS IN APRIL-MAY IN CONJUNCTION WITH RENEWALS OF UNEF/UNDOF MANDATES. PERES ALSO BELIEVED THAT SYRIANS MIGHT LAUNCH WAR IF THEY REFUSE TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF UNDOF MANDATE. ON OTHER HAND, ALLON, FOCUSSED HIS REMARKS ON EGYPT, FELT CHANCES OF WAR IN 1975 WERE SLIM, ALLON STRESSED THAT SADAT, IN ADDITION TO ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS, REALIZED THAT US HAD SAVED HIM FROM DEFEAT IN OCTOBER WAR AND WOULD NOT READILY JEOPARDIZE HIS NEW PRESTIGE IN ARAB WORLD BY RISKING NEW WAR FROM WHICH HE WOULD EMERGE DEFEATED. RABIN MADE SAME POINT RE US HAVING SAVED SADAT, BUT QUESTIONED US DECISION IN LIGHT SUBSEQUENT EVENTS. HE NOTED CHANCES OF SOVIET

INTERVENTION AS SLIGHT IN OCT 1973.

12. WESTBANK-PLO ISSUE. FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON RAISED POSSIBILITY OF INTERIM ISRAELI-JORDANIAN AGREEMENT, TEMPORARILY SETTING ASIDE WEST BANK ISSUE (SEE SEPTTEL). HE, AS WELL AS PERES, REPEATED WELL-KNOWN GOI POSITION THAT PALESTINIAN ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED EITHER WITH JORDAN AND/OR THROUGH EVOLUTION OF INDIGENOUS WEST BANK LEADERSHIP, BUT FIRMLY REJECTED ANY TALKS WITH PLO. ALLON STATED THAT MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT MUST BE SATISFACTORY TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE BECAUSE (A) THEY DESERVE IT AND (B) THERE CAN BE NO STABILITY IN REGION WITHOUT RESOLVING PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

13. IDF VISITS. IDF PULLED OUT ALL STOPS TO PROVIDE CODEL WITH ON-SITE APPRECIATION OF ISRAELI MILITARY SITUATION. ON JAN 24 CODEL VIEWED CAPTURED SOVIET EQUIPMENT, VISITED TANK REHABILITATION CENTER, RECEIVED BRIEFING BY COMMANDER OF AIR FORCE PELED AT HATZOR AFB IN NEGEV AND THEN VIEWED DISENGAGEMENT LINES AT RAS SUDAR AND MITAL PASS. ON JAN 25 CHIEF OF STAFF GUR TOOK SENATOR INOUE TO RIDGELINE ON WEST BANK AND THEN TO GOLAN HEIGHTS, WHERE THEY WERE JOINED BY COMMANDING GNERALS OF CENTRAL AND NORTHERN COMMANDS. ON WEST BANK GUR
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STRESSED THAT ARAB FORCES ON RIDGELINE COULD DOMINATE ENTIRE COASTAL PLAIN. GUR ARGUED THAT FROM MILITARY VIEWPOINT ISRAEL NEEDED TO CONTROL BOTH RIDGELINE AND JORDAN VALLEY. AT KIBBUTZ NEVO HAMA OVERLOOKING SEA OF GALILEE, GUR MADE CASE FOR NOT ALLOWING SYRIAN FORCES EVER AGAIN TO ENTER WESTERN GOLAN HEIGHTS. CODEL FINALLY VISITED HILL OVERLOOKING KUNEITRA, DRAMATIZING IMPORTANCE OF CONTROL OVER THOSE HILLS AND OTHER HIGH GROUND. GUR ALSO EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF DENYING SYRIAN MILITARY PRESENCE ON MT. HERMON. IN SUM, WHILE NOT ADDRESSING POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN NEGOTIATION, GUR ARGUED NON-NEGOTIABILITY OF SIGNIFICANT TERRAIN ON WEST BANK AND GOLAN HEIGHTS FOR ISRAELI DEFENSE.

14. WE WILL BE REPORTING BRIEFING BY COORDINATOR OF ADMINISTERED TERRITORIES VARDI BY SEPTTEL.
VELIOTES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, INTERVENTION, VISITS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TELAV00624
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750031-0314
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750112/aaaaakvo.tel
Line Count: 268
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <31 OCT 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL INOUE--SUMMARY REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, OREP, IS, US, XF, (INOUE, DANIEL K), (MATHIAS, CHARLES M)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006